DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 323 404 CE 055 814

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TITLE Training for Leisure. Flexible Training Packages for Operatives in Leisure-Related Industries. Part 1.
INSTITUTION Further Education Unit, London (England).
REPORT NO ISBN-1-85338-153-5
PUB DATE 89
NOTE 41p.; For part 2, see CE 055 815.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Access to Education; Adult Education; *Athletics; Continuing Education; Foreign Countries; *Leisure Education; Leisure Time; *Lifelong Learning; Parks; *Recreational Programs; Training
IDENTIFIERS *Recreation Occupations; *United Kingdom

ABSTRACT

A project was designed to identify and define training needs at the operative level in the sport, leisure, and recreation industry in the United Kingdom. The industry is attracting increasing attention in further education (FE) as a result of rapid development. The industry, however, is diverse. Provision of FE must be flexible if it is to meet needs in as broad an area as possible. The major growth area is the provision of leisure centers by local authorities, but there is also rapid growth in private provision of leisure facilities, including both major centers such as theme parks and general development as in the diversification of use of farmland. The recommendations for FE arising from the project place emphasis on transferability, flexibility, and relevance, summed up in the notion of openness and responsiveness, which provides a useful general model for adult training and staff development strategies. Suitable assessment techniques are also explored. Recommendations concerning a suitable ethos for course delivery and the importance of skill training are made. (CML)

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FEU REPLAN

TRAINING FOR LEISURE

Part 1

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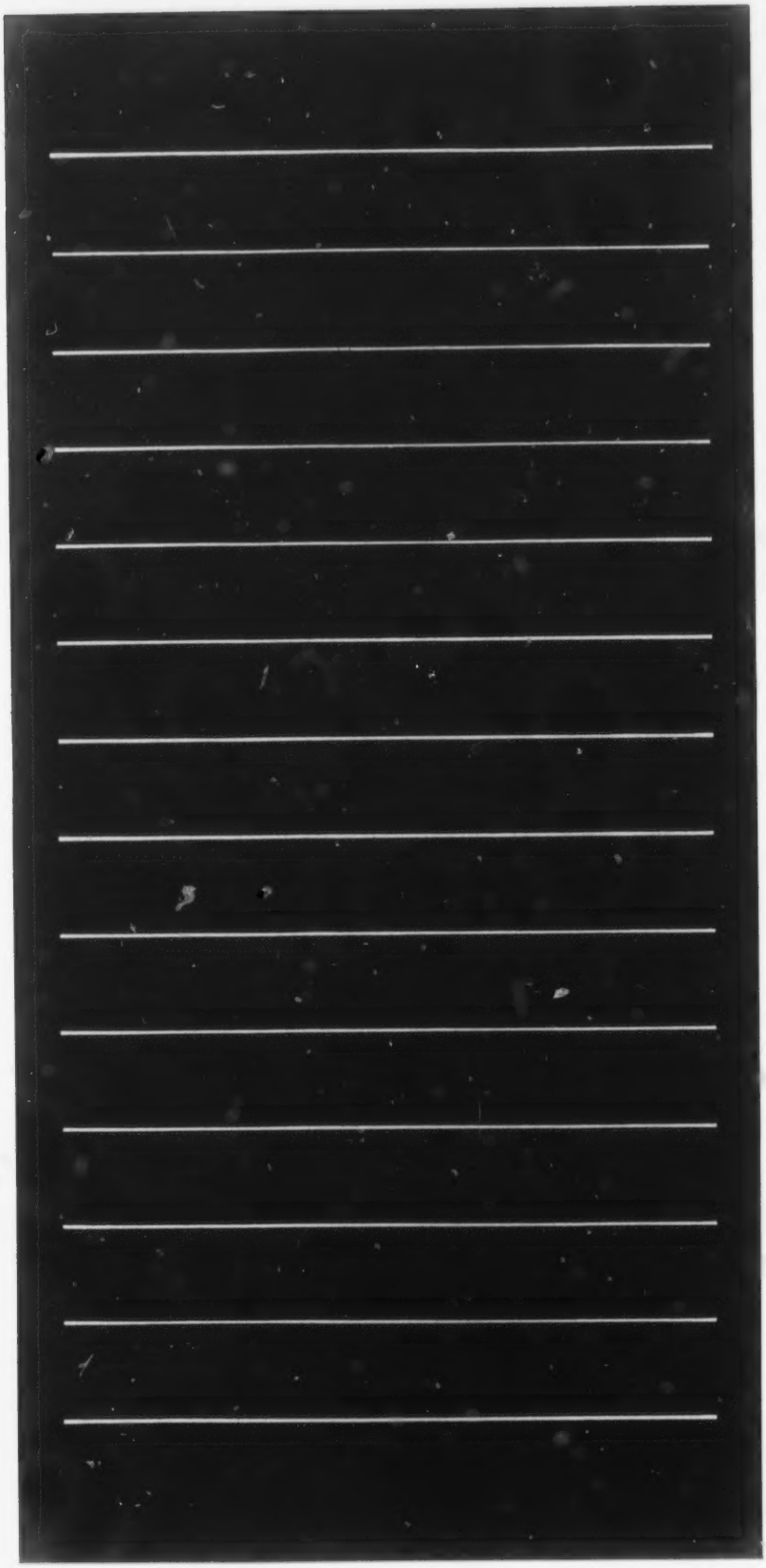

DESIGN & PRODUCTION
EDU-COM
C·O·N·S·U·L·T·A·N·T·S
YATTENDON, ENGLAND

ISBN 1 85338 153 5

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are grateful to the following for their help:

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All the centre managers for their advice and assistance during this research project. Without their help, this report would not have been possible.

The operatives and those in local authority recreation and amenity departments and educational organisations who gave so generously of their time.

Warwickshire Education Authority and the Further Education Unit for their support and encouragement.

Roz Gay, word processor operator, and Dora Bosworth, typist.

John McDougall-Birch for his contribution and guidance during Phase 1 of the project.

The many members of the teaching and support staff at North Warwickshire College, particularly those who prepared and presented information at the INSET training days.

This project owes a great deal to the unemployed students who participated on the pilot course.

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FOREWORD

This report, which appears in two separate parts, is the outcome of a study undertaken for the Further Education Unit by North Warwickshire College of Technology and Art (NWCTA) during 1985-7.

The first phase of the project was designed to identify and define training needs at the operative level in the sport, leisure and recreation industries. An outcome of this phase was an FEU bulletin *Training for the Leisure Industries* (1986). Its successful completion led to approval for a further phase: designing, piloting and evaluating a curriculum arising from the needs analysis.

The experience of the whole project is described in the first part of the report. This industry is attracting increasing attention in FE as a result of rapid development in outlets for sport, leisure and recreation. The industry, however, is diverse, and provision must be flexible if it is to meet needs in as broad an area as possible. The major growth area is the provision of leisure centres by local authorities, but there is also rapid growth in private provision of leisure facilities, including both major centres like theme parks and general development like the diversification of use of farmland.

FEU has given some attention to related issues, with regard to both the rural economy (*The Rural Economy – An FEU View* 1987 and the *Rural Economy* series of bulletins) and the leisure industries (see bulletin summarising FEU experience, *The Leisure, Tourism and Crafts Industries* 1988).

The recommendations arising from this project place emphasis on transferability, flexibility and relevance, summarised by a notion of openness and responsiveness, which provides a useful general model for adult training and staff development strategies. In addition, suitable assessment techniques are explored. Finally, recommendations are made about a suitable ethos for course delivery and the importance of skill training.

Part 2 of the report is concerned with the learning materials produced by the project (see introduction to that document).

The report is recommended to FE colleges as a model for provision of adult training. Its specific vocational context does not narrow the possible impact of its recommendations, which have particular relevance at this time of fundamental revision of adult training, following the introduction of the Training Agency's Employment Training initiation and the new notions of transferable competences arising from the review of vocational qualifications undertaken by NCVQ. Responses to the document would be welcome and should be addressed to Martin Johnson at FEU.

Dennis Drysdale
Deputy Chief Officer
Further Education Unit

INTRODUCTION

The processes involved in curriculum development extend far beyond the preparation of a syllabus and timetable. The FEU model *(figure 1)* illustrates the processes followed while developing and testing a course for long-term unemployed adults interested in training to work in the leisure industry at operative level.

The sections of this report correspond to the major processes of curriculum development identified in the model:

- analysis of needs;
- design and implementation;
- evaluation;
- review.

The complexity of curriculum development predicates that these sections are not discrete; each focuses on the main processes in the area.

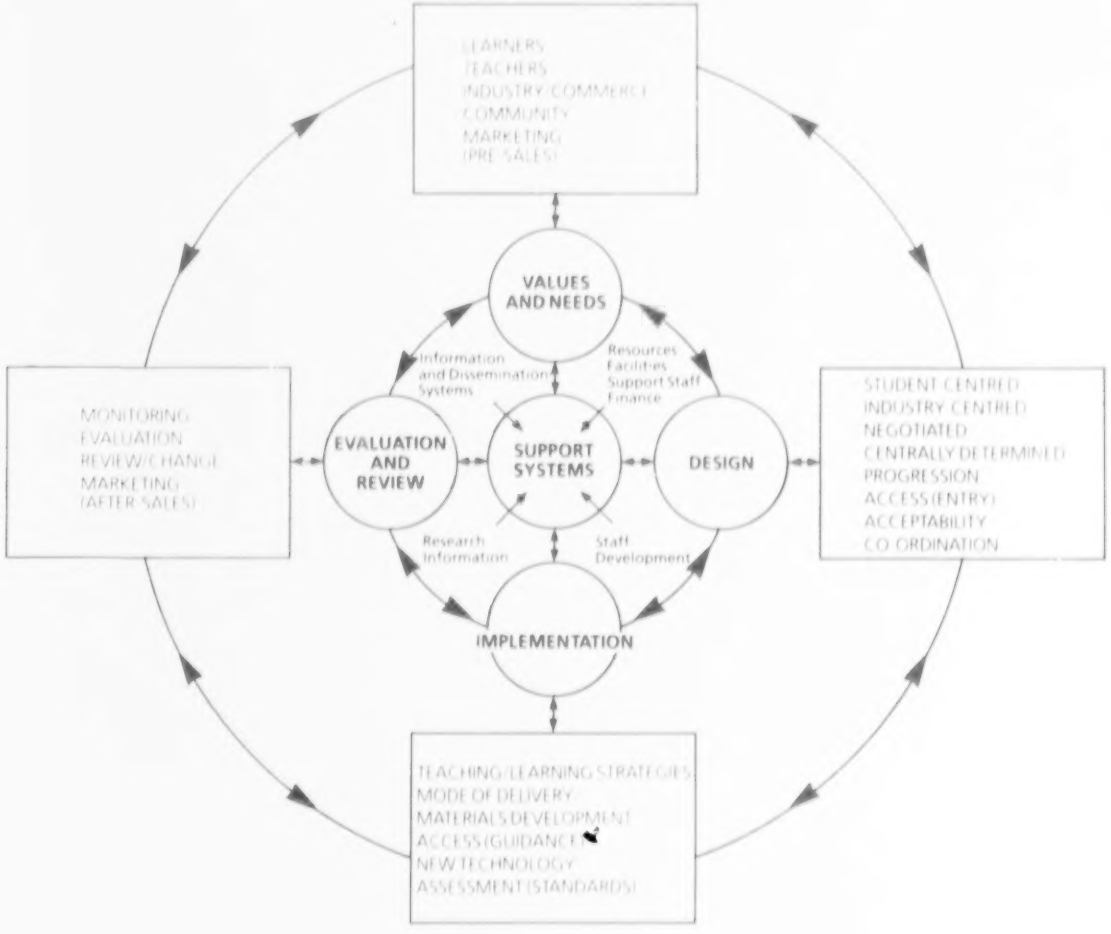

Figure 1: ***Process of curriculum development***[1]

1 ANALYSIS OF NEEDS (Phase 1)

BACKGROUND

Phase 1 of this project, undertaken in 1985-6, was designed to identify and define training needs at the operative* level in the sport, leisure and recreation industries**, one of the few growth areas in the West Midlands and, as such, likely to generate employment opportunities for relatively unskilled unemployed people.

TRAINING NEEDS

The results of this research showed that there are no ready-made, appropriate training schemes for operatives to meet demands from this area:

- Most existing training is aimed at the management or supervisor level. What little training there is at the operative level is aimed mainly at employees rather than the unemployed.
- Managers are dissatisfied with existing training provision and with funding for releasing employees and paying for training (local authorities are responsible for most of the organisations identified as having growth potential).
- Very few workers at operative level move on to supervisory posts. The main obstacle is lack of appropriate training opportunities and encouragement to progress.
- The pre-vocational training available is theoretical rather than practically based. Managers criticise the lack of skill-based learning and practical, transferable skills within training programmes. These provide the key to greater flexibility at operative level.
- Boredom, which at operative level causes high job turnover, may be overcome by the development of flexible and variable work schedules following training in a wider variety of skills.
- Managers criticise the lack of flexibility in job rehearsal provision by schools and FE establishments. Most placements are from 9am to 4pm, whereas evenings and weekends are the busiest times at leisure centres.
- The 'graduates' of existing pre-vocational courses are mainly in the 16-18 age range. Managers, however, are seeking a more mature entry age.

There is a striking coincidence between the average age of appointment at the operative level in this industry, 22 (which reflects managers' emphasis on personal qualities, such as the ability to assume responsibility and relate to the general public), and the high levels of unemployment in the 20-34 age range.

The unemployed men and women expected to benefit from a suitable training scheme would have the following characteristics:

- 20-35 years old;
- willing to learn;
- interested in sport and leisure;
- able to get on with the public;
- enthusiastic;
- able and willing to work flexible hours.

* *Operative – defined as an employee who works in the leisure industries at the first level of entry, provides a service to the public and may intend pursuing a career, including promotion, within the industries.*

** *Sport, leisure and recreation industries – defined as organisations dealing with large numbers of the public on a daily basis, like sports and leisure centres, swimming pools, bowling alleys and skating rinks.*

CONCLUSIONS BASED ON ANALYSIS OF NEEDS

Induction course

Recommendations arising from the needs analysis included a structured induction programme providing opportunities for:

- students to sample types of work expected of them as operatives in leisure centres;
- students to have a period of self-assessment following the trial of various work areas;
- students to sample types of teaching/learning strategies used on the course;
- tutors to familiarise themselves with the variety of experience and knowledge in the student group;
- tutors to undertake diagnostic appraisal of each student;
- guidance to check students' aspirations, abilities and experience against the demands of the variety of work tasks encountered as operatives in leisure centres;
- counselling to check which learning strategies are best suited to the students.

An induction course would improve the retention rate of an adult course.

Colleges have to cater for the needs of adult students and allow sufficient tutorial time and staff team meetings in addition to adequate staff development and support arrangements. Adult students need to interrelate for support, and a feeling of group identity needs to be encouraged. To this end, there should be provision for a body of adult students to meet as a group, exchange ideas and work together towards a common goal.

The product

It was recommended that the training programme should be based on the following modular structure:

Compulsory Modules

1. Interpersonal Skills/Personal Development
2. Health and Safety
3. Centre Cleaning and Maintenance
4. Organisational, Administrative and Reception Skills
5. RLSS Pool Bronze Medallion
6. Adult First Aid Certificate
7. Sports Teaching/Refereeing Qualification or CCPR Sports Leaders Award

Plus qualification in one of the following:

Optional Modules

8. Sports Teaching or Refereeing (to be different from 7)
9. Swimming Teaching
10. Weight Training
11. Sauna, Solaria, Sunbed
12. Aerobics
13. Catering and Bar Skills

These are free-standing modules which reflect the priorities identified by managers and which, as a whole, constitute a programme able to be certificated. Since the aim of the course is to present a unified whole, an integrated approach is essential.

All modules are geared to make the 'graduates' more employable, for example:

- interpersonal skills – these are transferable to any industry which deals with the public;
- job rehearsal – local employers will get to know the students involved;
- technical knowledge – all areas of the course have been designed in conjunction with employers, so all material is relevant.

The process

The process of learning is as important as the knowledge and skills to be acquired. Learning should start from the student's experience, which should be drawn on to meet the course objectives.

The following strategies are recommended:

- continued opportunities for counselling and formative guidance;
- flexibility, so that the programme is student-centred;
- skill-based, operative level work related to the leisure industry;
- opportunities for job rehearsal;
- a modular approach with options according to students' sporting aptitudes and leisure interests;
- opportunities for accreditation by national examining bodies and for progression to supervisory and/or specialist training.

The contribution of counselling to the development of the personal skills is crucial. Flexibility is required to accommodate adults' special needs and increase transferability across a wide range of leisure industry settings. The course must be skill-based to accommodate employers' needs, although qualities such as integrity and politeness, so valued by employers, are not easily covered by skill-based definitions. Close liaison between the centres and college assists job rehearsal and a modular approach facilitates flexibility.

Many of the essential skills can be developed through problem solving and active learning. The following activities are recommended:

- group work;
- discussions;
- reflection;
- role play;
- simulation;
- integrated assignments;
- work-based tasks;
- job rehearsal.

Some parts of the course can be undertaken through distance learning, and support materials need to be designed with this in mind. Group work will enable students to reflect on what they have learned through college work and the transferability of that knowledge and skill to the context of their placements.

Usually, a student would complete a programme of modules as indicated in *Figure 2*. It is recognised that not all students will bring the same set of skills to the course, nor will they learn at the same pace. It is therefore desirable not only to offer a programme of additional studies for adult students with particular learning difficulties, but also to operate a system of exemptions to accommodate students' existing proficiencies. Should the students, on completion of the course, fail to meet certain objectives, then they should be given opportunities to retake the following year.

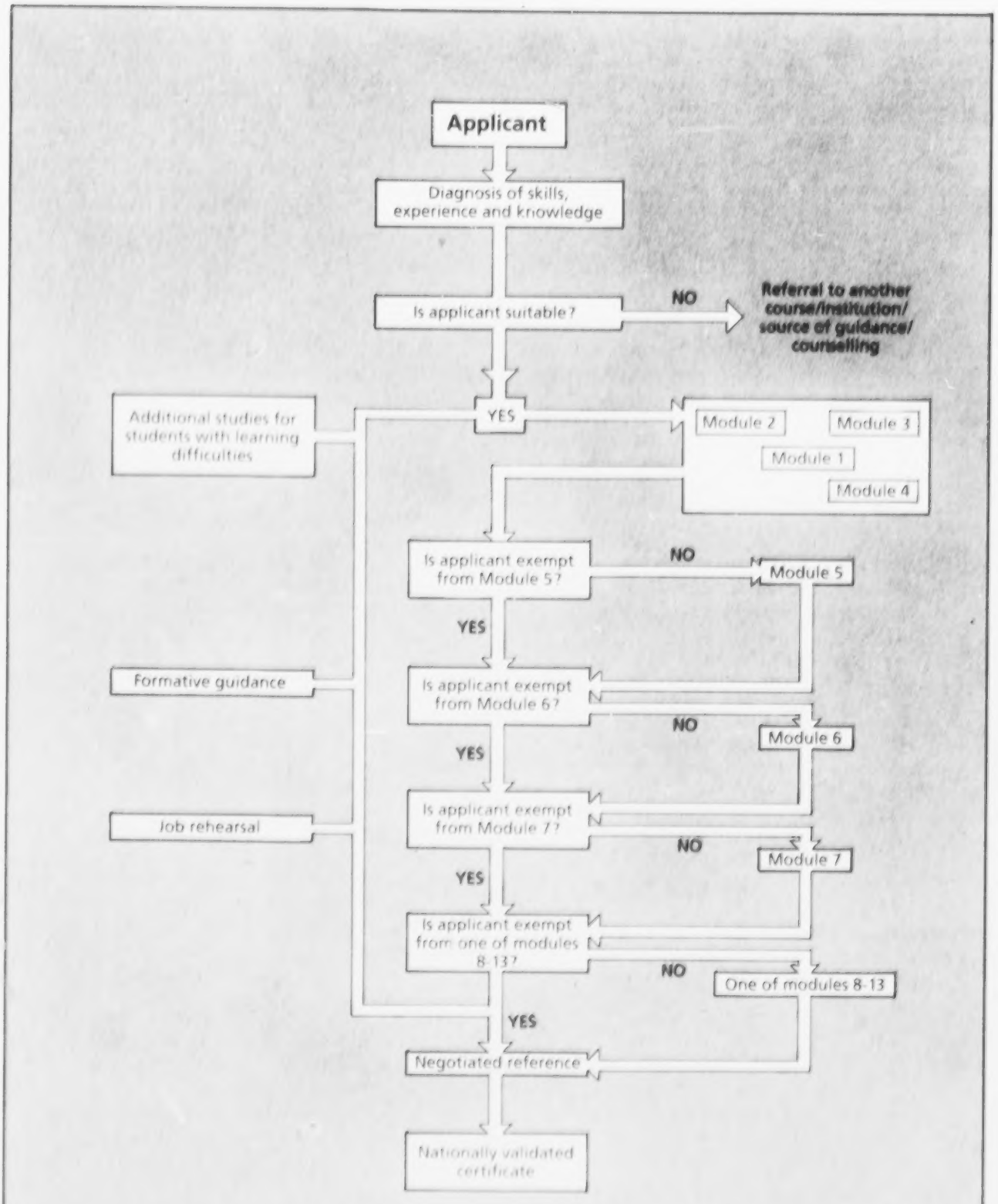

Figure 2: ***The route to qualification***

To obtain a certificate, the student must satisfactorily complete modules 1-4 and gain qualifications in, or have accreditation for, modules 5-7 and one of modules 8-13.

There should not be an emphasis on written examination for the course; but for certification to be acceptable, levels of competence related to the objectives in the modules will have to be measured. To achieve this, the following methods are recommended:

- A system of formative guidance could be used throughout the course, which would allow both tutor and student to benefit from feedback. Regular reviews would aid the student's awareness, self-assessment and personal development. Methodical and coherent assessments of strengths and weaknesses and development of individual participants will be helped by the use of checklists. These would cover the major learning objectives in the training modules.
- A summative profile or negotiated reference would indicate the level of achievement the student has reached at the end of the course.
- There should be continuous assessment of college-based work.
- Integrated assignment work, based on job rehearsal, should be assessed.
- A job rehearsal proforma should be completed by the employer in negotiation with the tutor and the student. This would form an addendum to the summative document.
- Modules 5-13 are all certificated. Students have, therefore, to achieve the objectives within these modules to the satisfaction of the appropriate examiners.

Part of the course will involve explanation of the possibilities of follow-on courses, relevant bodies and associations, ways of obtaining employment and career prospects with the result that, on completion of the course, a student should be more aware of opportunities for further training and employment.

The second phase of this project aimed to:

- develop further the flexible modular structure defined in Phase 1;
- identify staff development and other support needs arising from the introduction of the trial-tested modules and materials;
- continue and extend the strong links already forged with the industry and employers during Phase 1;
- investigate national accreditation for the course.

2 DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

This section deals with the design and implementation of a suitable curriculum for leisure centre operatives, based on analysis of needs. It provides broad guidelines for practitioners and policy-makers who wish to establish such a course in their institutions.

DESIGN

Links with industry

The individual modules were identified by analysis of needs during Phase 1 of the project. The next step was to add the detail to the course structure. In order to do this, close links with the 25 centres used in Phase 1 were re-established and new links were made with leisure complexes in the immediate locality. Managers were asked for their help and advice, in particular:

- to allow students to visit their institutions;
- to provide work placements for both staff and students;
- to consider the possibility of managers becoming tutors on the pilot course;
- to help identify specific aims and objectives for each course module.

Follow-up visits to centre managers were very fruitful. We were able to identify, for example, particular strengths and expertise within the locality, with reference to centre managers who had experience in teaching both in physical education and as part-time further education lecturers. We were able to compile a directory of lecturers, additional to college staff, who were willing to take part on the course, together with an indication of their particular expertise.

In order to ensure validity in training and in the working environment, further meetings with a small group of local centre managers and specialists of appropriate disciplines were arranged to discuss individual modules, their aims and suggested teaching and learning strategies. These were checked and discussed further by the project steering committee.

Although the analysis of needs referred to employers' and students' needs, course aims and objectives are centred around the needs of the student, i.e. how to make 'graduates' more employable. Interpersonal skills, in particular, will be useful in other areas of employment which involve dealing with the public.

The modules (see Part 2) are presented in a free-standing form to enable flexibility of provision. However, team-teaching and cross-modular assignments will enable students to see how modules relate to each other and to the world of work. Although some overlapping of work will be inevitable and indeed desirable, it should be ensured that course time is not wasted on needless duplication of information.

The pilot course

A 10-week pilot foundation course was arranged to test some of the study materials. The designated course tutor was, from this point onwards, involved with the design and implementation of the curriculum.

It was decided, for the purposes of the pilot, that 'off-the-shelf' modules, i.e. First Aid, Pool Bronze Medallion, Sports Coaching and Refereeing Awards, CCPR Sports Leadership Award and Swimming Coaching/ Teaching Qualification, would be excluded from 'timetabled activities' as they do not require 'testing'. Students would be encouraged to look at opportunities within the locality for gaining these awards and qualifications.

For the foundation course, each module would have to cover selected areas of priority. These priorities would be determined in liaison with specialists within the disciplines.

Publicity

Publicity material such as posters, leaflets and advertisements were designed by the project team and distributed to sports centres, libraries, Jobcentres, career centres, fitness centres and college agencies such as Adult Preparation Training and Wider Opportunities for Women. Local press and radio were also used.

Timetabling

As most college-based lecturers had contracted a full teaching timetable for the year and centre managers had other commitments, their availability for the foundation course was restricted. It was, therefore, not surprising that the teaching team, when it was eventually formed, consisted largely of part-time staff.

It was decided that all prospective students should have 'tasters' of the optional modules. This, it was felt, would provide a better foundation from which to make their choices.

Negotiations were held with the prospective teaching team concerning the time-scale for each input into the course. It became obvious that the needs of staff and students would vary from week to week, depending on the nature of the work. It was, therefore, decided to look at the timetable on a weekly basis. To overcome organisational problems, it was suggested that each student be given a diary which could not only include timetabling details on a day-to-day basis but could also serve as a record of work covered.

The course studies were:

WEEK 1	*Induction Phase*
WEEKS 2 – 9	*To be timetabled to include possibilities of team-teaching*
WEEK 10	*Integrated assignment*

The time allocation was:

Interpersonal Skills	4 hrs a week
Health and Safety	4 hrs a week
Centre Cleaning and Maintenance	3 hrs a week
Organisational, Administrative and Reception Skills	3 hrs a week

plus the following 'tasters' (1 hr × 2 weeks each):

Catering
Weight Training
Aerobics
Sauna, Solaria and Sunbed

(A detailed breakdown of staffing and timetable arrangements for the course is available from FEU.)

It was proposed that for weeks 2 to 9, staff should prepare a list of eight topics which covered key elements of their own module so that individual assignments and course work could be centred around them. This provided opportunities for:

- familiarisation of the teaching team with the whole curriculum;
- the team to exchange ideas on the topics concerned;
- establishment of a unified approach to the work;
- ensuring that there would be no unnecessary overlap of detail;
- making greater use of any centre visit to gather information for different modules through a single visit;
- identifying specific interpersonal skills which would be relevant to each topic.

The team agreed that they would have to work closely together. Team meetings were arranged for the end of induction and the 4th and 9th weeks, with a view to:

- identifying good practice in staff performance;
- suggesting collective ways of improving curriculum practice;
- changing structures and practices where necessary, through mutually agreed arrangements and strategies.

These meetings were incorporated into the team's timetable. The course tutor was timetabled for 1½ hours of tutorials a week.

The necessary course integration was achieved by offering Interpersonal Skills through team-teaching other course modules.

The only timetable drawback as far as the students were concerned was the signing-on times for unemployment benefit. The college wrote to the DHSS and this problem was remedied.

Accommodation

Accommodation requirements were identified as:

- one large room suitable for team-teaching;
- one small tutorial room near main room for individual counselling;
- audio-visual viewing room;
- use of sports areas, including:
  - changing rooms,
  - sports hall,
  - callisthenics room,
  - weights room,
  - dance studio;
- use of catering area, including:
  - bar,
  - self-service area,
  - teaching room;
- use of facilities in Beauty Therapy area, including:
  - sauna suite,
  - sunbed area,
  - teaching room.

Major resources were identified as:

- video equipment (portable pack) and software;
- audio-cassette recording equipment;
- flip charts;
- mini-bus;
- health and safety film.

Job rehearsal

The teaching team decided that students should negotiate their own job rehearsal in their own time. Liaison with the course tutor was essential to facilitate negotiations with bodies such as the county council and trade unions.

The team decided that they would state a minimum number of hours which should be spent on job rehearsal by each student. Centre managers felt that more employers would be willing to offer work placements if the students were available at realistic times, e.g. evenings and weekends. Students could choose, or might need, to cover more hours.

It was felt that a checklist was required for job rehearsal as a guide for managers, students and tutors. The checklist should echo the course objectives.

Induction

The course tutor and member of staff responsible for the Interpersonal Skills module covered the Induction Phase using a team-teaching approach. One day was spent by the group in local leisure complexes and visiting the borough leisure and recreation department. The teaching team's input was a questionnaire aimed at encouraging students to gather information (see 'Sample Learning Materials', Part 2).

During the final session of the Induction Phase, the teaching team met the students in order to introduce themselves and review the Induction Phase together.

Assessment

It was important to identify the course objectives in terms of personal and social skills and work-related skills. The objectives form the basis for self-assessment which takes place throughout the course, once it has been established that the students are not in competition with each other but are assessing themselves against the criteria of a leisure centre assistant.

Staff undertook to assess the students at the end of the 10-week course. They did not want to establish a 'test' or 'examination'. It was decided that the final week of the course would be spent on an integrated assignment (see Part 2). Staff felt that, when marking assignments, detailed, constructive comments should be given, together with a face-to-face discussion with the students when work is returned.

IMPLEMENTATION

INSET training

As with any new course, staff development issues needed to be identified prior to the foundation course. We saw the way forward as organising a two-day INSET course in order to facilitate a meeting of prospective lecturers from the college and the leisure centres. (Details are given in the next section, 'Evaluation' (pages 13-15).)

Staff from many departments of the college with expertise in these areas were invited to present the course. A meeting was organised to discuss the main issues the course needed to address. This provided an opportunity for contributors to discuss the purpose and direction of their inputs with the rest of the team. This exercise was very rewarding in providing an integrated approach to the INSET course.

Details were sent to all personnel who might have some input into the future programming of the course. These included:

- centre managers;
- relevant college support staff;

- part-time and full-time college staff from:
  - Physical Education,
  - Communications,
  - Business Studies,
  - Adult Preparation Training,
  - Adult Education,
  - Catering,
  - Beauty Therapy,
  - Care/Counselling,
  - Wider Opportunities for Women.

The INSET course provided a forum where staff could discuss previous experiences, exchange ideas and clarify details about the course. There were also requests for specific details about the number of students enrolled, staffing, room allocation and available resources.

Once the teaching team was identified, staff suggested that they held regular meetings to:

- clarify aims, objectives and teaching and learning strategies;
- further curriculum development;
- agree short-term and long-term objectives, programme design, programme implementation and programme review;
- ensure an integrated approach through adopting team-teaching strategies.

It was suggested that these meetings required unusual levels of commitment and enthusiasm from all staff concerned. Staff also felt that further staff development was likely to be curriculum led and, therefore, issues would arise automatically as the course material evolved.

SUPPORT

College management

An integrated, flexible course requires staffing and resource considerations which are quite different from those generally applied to other more traditional courses[2]. Staff expressed the need for active support from college management, especially with regard to flexible accommodation, staffing, and the hidden hours associated with team meetings, profiling, counselling and work placements. Although management was sympathetic, resources for a short course beginning half-way through the year were of limited priority. Staff were able to gain regular use of the minibus, access to all audio-visual and reprographic facilities, and appropriate accommodation for these. Team-teaching and tutorial time was supported. Regular accommodation was far from ideal, but no alternative was available.

Materials

It was suggested that the materials used on the course might be better understood by the staff team if assignments written individually or by the team as a whole could actually be worked through by individual lecturers because:

- it would prevent conflicting advice from the team on integrated assignments;
- the problems experienced by students would be better appreciated and anticipated by the team;
- it would provide a staff development exercise, e.g. college staff would learn more about the leisure complex by undergoing experiential learning on suitable student-centred learning material.

Teaching team

The problems associated with flexibility and freedom of open learning systems could prove a problem to students in terms of self-discipline and motivation; a great deal of support must therefore be given by the course team. This can be done in a number of ways:

- specifying learning objectives, ensuring that students understand the learning materials, i.e. what the tutor has said has been understood by the students in the same way as it was meant;
- presenting learning materials in a way calculated to stimulate and hold students' interest (Learning activities should develop relevant skills; effective progress is more likely to occur when the student is actively participating in the learning process.);
- supervising and managing students' progress; developing existing skills where necessary, helping them to overcome any obstacles so that new skills and goals can be achieved (Provision must, therefore, be given for feedback on students' performance. This can be beneficial only if students have understood the acceptable level of achievement. For example, a model answer for a typical course assignment could be presented, or some other tutorial guidance given, so that students can understand what is required. There should be provision for additional exercises to be tackled by students, at strategic points in the course, either for self-assessment (with answers provided) or to be marked by a tutor[1].);
- monitoring and assessing the extent to which learning objectives are progressively met. This will involve explanations of how the assessments and profiles work. The students' role in negotiating short-term learning objectives should be clearly explained. All information regarding the individual student should be recorded, including such details as:
  - enrolment date,
  - educational background,
  - sources of potential difficulty,
  - dates of all communications, with précis of what was said,
  - dates of all individual counselling/tutorials,
  - dates and assignments together with assessment criticism/mark;
- clarifying the extent and nature of duties to students;
- clarifying the nature of the relationship between tutor and student.

3 EVALUATION

This section evaluates the success of the design and implementation process. Problems experienced during the implementation stage are examined and the results of testing the course design presented.

Evaluation was undertaken in a variety of ways. Formal evaluation was through questionnaires, requesting the opinions of students on course materials, what they felt they had gained and what their future plans were, based on the experiences of the course. Less formal evaluation was through monitoring the developments and discussions at team meetings, discussions with staff and students, and observation of elements of the course.

MODES OF DELIVERY AND STAFF TRAINING AND SUPPORT

Staff training

The project team devised a two-day INSET programme to address some of the difficulties staff presenting the new course might face. The programme covered:

- **Characteristics of the adult unemployed client group:** This addressed the issue of the conditions in which adults learn best and the needs of adult unemployed students. Techniques of delivery are the crucial aspects of successful adult courses. 'It's not so much what you do, but how you do it.' Staff were encouraged to consider their role in the presentation of adult courses and the importance of creating an open, friendly, supportive and responsive atmosphere. It was stressed that unemployed adults often feel vulnerable and need careful guidance and counselling within a supportive system which is flexible enough to accommodate their needs.
- **Relevance and importance of induction programmes:** This section examined the need for guidance. Adults apply for courses for a variety of reasons. The induction course should provide students with a realistic taster of the activities and content to be experienced in the main body of the course so that they make a balanced and informed decision as to whether the course serves their needs. It should also provide an opportunity for self-assessment and staff evaluation as to whether students will gain from the course. The course team needs to work towards an agreed set of objectives. Everyone should be clear about the aims of the induction course and there should be a review upon completion. It was stressed that college accounting systems rarely allowed sufficient time for the meetings and counselling which are essential for such strategies to be employed.
- **Need for counselling skills and a basic introduction to these:** An important aspect of adult training is enabling students to take responsibility for their own learning. Counselling and negotiation skills are important for staff and students if positive use is to be made of assessment tools such as records of achievement and negotiated references. Individuals respond to situations in different ways. The adult course must aim to balance the needs of the course and the needs of individuals embarked upon it.

- **Importance of interpersonal skills and their integration into all the course modules:** The importance of job rehearsal in clarifying to students the relevance of interpersonal skills was discussed. Suggested learning activities involved a wide range of active learning techniques such as role play, problem solving, case studies and use of video equipment. Staff presenting training modules should identify the interpersonal skills they are covering and bring them to the attention of the students. To enhance this, a team-teaching approach was recommended. Staff also felt that residential experience would be an excellent method of developing and reinforcing these skills. After discussion, it was suggested that a tutorial or workshop session would be needed to concentrate on and draw out the interpersonal skills covered. This was seen as valid because of the importance of interpersonal skills in jobs dealing with large numbers of people.
- **Techniques of assessment, especially profiling, using a bank of descriptors and cross-modular assessment:** Profiling operates in two distinctive ways – as a reinforcement of achievement and as an alternative/additional accreditation to formal exams. It abandons norm referencing, i.e. measuring candidates' progress against specified criteria or objectives. It involves consultation between staff and students and gives the latter some power in the assessment process. It is time consuming and provision needs to be made for this in course hours. The profiling system involving a range of descriptions was rejected because it was felt that too many descriptors made the profile unwieldy while too few reduce it to blandness. The Record of Achievement (see Part 2) was the preferred method.
- **Development work on the modules' aims, objectives and teaching/learning strategies.**
- **Production of resource material.**

The INSET training was successful in raising important issues related to working with the client group – adults over 20 years of age who have been unemployed for some time – and allowed and encouraged a free exchange of ideas. It also familiarised staff with the width of the course where they had previously been studying and developing only one module. The INSET days brought together staff from all areas of the college with representatives of the leisure industry. This was an important element in enhancing the working relationship between college staff and leisure industry staff and developing an understanding of the expertise both sides could offer in the development of a useful course.

The INSET programme, while revealing to staff the nature of the course, raised anxieties stemming from the realisation that traditional models and strategies could not simply be adapted – a new style of learning environment and class management was required. It is important that staff should confront these issues well before the start of the course. Our INSET programme took place eight weeks before the start of the course and there was considerable concern and anxiety about the imminence of the course. Some of the staff presenting the course were unable to attend the training days. Planning training well in advance allows staff time to assimilate the information and prepare themselves thoroughly, and increases the chances of involving all those participating. Staff training needs to be accessible at all times.

Once awareness among staff has been raised, there is a need for further in-service training or self-help groups to allay anxieties and help develop the necessary skills through workshops and discussions. The INSET course revealed that some staff faced with a new course wished to employ traditional lecture delivery rather than responding to the spirit of the

curriculum design. Discussions with staff experienced in adult provision, detailed analysis of the aims and objectives of the modules and assistance in developing some suitable learning materials provided staff with support and gave them confidence to implement all aspects of the course design. A major problem with curriculum changes is that staff become so caught up in the detail of the course content and administration that they have little time left for learning themselves – developing and clarifying the philosophy and delivery of the course. Although there was considerable expertise within the college in terms of working with a variety of student groups, few had the skills necessary for staff development. Successful staff training and development requires specific expertise and skills as well as experience of other curricular areas.

A major area of weakness in the INSET training provision identified by staff after the short course was the lack of cover of counselling and negotiation skills. Most staff felt inadequate in this area. They were largely unprepared and untrained for this role and found it very difficult to fulfil satisfactorily. More specific training in counselling and negotiating skills would be an essential element of further staff training and should be undertaken prior to working on the course.

Staff resources

An important issue for course organisers was the incorporation of time for essential aspects of the course such as negotiating pace, purpose and progress, records of achievement, liaising with work placement supervisors before, during and after student job rehearsal, and team meetings. Time for such work is being allocated, especially with open learning systems. However, college-based courses still have difficulty in gaining recognition of essential hours because of the accounting systems which operate in colleges, i.e. money cannot be claimed when class contact hours are not directly involved.

For the shortened course we were able to gain nine hours of double staffing time to ensure integration of the interpersonal skills into other modules. The course tutor was timetabled for 1½ hours a week tutorial time, but had no remission for administrative duties. All team members were timetabled for essential course team meetings. The requirements for a year course planned well in advance could be more readily identified and negotiated for. If these courses are to be successful in fulfilling adult training needs, time for guidance, assessment and review must be provided for. They cannot rely on staff goodwill.

Student needs

Staff engaged on the shortened course expressed concern as to how this was to serve the needs of students. It was important that students should not feel like guinea-pigs and there should be progression for them should they seek it. (These concerns should be borne in mind whenever new courses are begun.) It was decided, therefore, to offer a shortened course as a foundation. It was to include a taster of all the course activities. This could be followed by a second tier offering fuller coverage of compulsory modules, their choice of optional modules, and job rehearsal. A third tier concentrating on job rehearsal and job search skills would complete this package.

Course team

Even though the course structure provides free-standing modules, there is inevitably overlap in the content. To avoid unnecessary repetition, consultation between staff teaching the modules was recommended. The short course instituted a course team structure. The course tutor and staff teaching compulsory modules met regularly to exchange ideas, compare

progress and discuss new initiatives. A close-knit team encourages coherent provision ensuring:

- presentation of all key elements of the course;
- no conflicting information or practices;
- no unnecessary overlap of material,
- awareness and coverage of interpersonal skills in all areas;
- integration of curriculum.

Students felt that the core elements were well covered. Difficulties arose when lecturers from the leisure industry were unable to attend meetings and training sessions.

When asked how the course could have been better organised, many students said that lecturers needed to know what the others were teaching because material was repeated and this was boring. Also there was a need to avoid complicated theory: 'try to direct things more towards basic knowledge that a leisure complex assistant would require'.

As well as ensuring the smooth running of the course, the meetings gave support to the staff most involved in presenting the course to the students. The team for the short course included college lecturers and leisure centre managers. This mixture was particularly useful in that it provided a wealth of knowledge, expertise and skills.

Staff suggested the components of the course team should provide experts within core areas of the course, commitment to the course, the ability to be flexible, and willingness to share their expertise in facilitating integration of the curriculum.

Modes of delivery

The pilot course revealed that students were unhappy with traditional lecture delivery, which was seen as boring and irrelevant. Active learning involving students in discussion, problem solving and role play was perceived as most useful and most important in generating enthusiasm and maintaining students' commitment to the course.

The differences in staff experience proved very important in terms of the success of the course as far as the students were concerned. The staff presenting the course were either lecturers experienced in certain areas, or were employed at leisure centres and had specific vocational knowledge. Some leisure centre staff also had teacher training and/or lecturing experience. For students, presentation of the material was of crucial importance. Even where staff were qualified and experienced, unimaginative presentation, where students were passive and lectured to, led to discontent, increased absenteeism and failure to produce assignments. Staff presenting the course need training in appropriate presentation and learning techniques.

Learning materials

The preparation of commercial standard distance learning materials was beyond the brief of the project, but suitable packages are obtainable from various sources (details available from FEU).

Appropriate sample learning materials are included in Part 2 of this report. Students responded most readily to materials which had immediate application to the world of work. Tasks involving observation and visits were perceived as more relevant and useful by them.

Computer-aided tutorials allow greater flexibility for students in terms of access and pace of work. Unfortunately, these tutorials were not ready in time for testing during the shortened course. The development of the Open College also promised broadcast material of a suitable standard for the future. Suggestions for the production of leisure-based broadcasts were received with interest.

ASSESSMENT TECHNIQUES AND STANDARDS

Assignments

The sample learning activities (Part 2) reveal the approach to assignments that we recommended:

- they should engage the student in an activity – problem solving, decision making, collecting and analysing data;
- they should be written in simple, clear language, as far as possible without ambiguity or dreariness. Often a direct, individual approach is effective;
- they should encourage students to develop their own ideas, resources or activities;
- they should avoid excessive written components;
- each assignment should have a specific content area and aim;
- the visual presentation of the material is important in motivating the student;
- a variety of approaches should be employed;
- they should encourage students to work together, discuss their ideas and seek help if they need it;
- at least some of the assignments should utilise the skills and knowledge from more than one module;
- some of the assignments must be work-based.

Most of the students responded positively to the assignments and completed them to the best of their ability, although in a few instances they had found the modules uninteresting and were unwilling to study further.

Completion of assignments should result in a review of the finished article and discussion of its attributes and limitations. The use of constructive comments rather than grades or marks is to be encouraged.

Job rehearsal

The assessment of job rehearsal should ideally be negotiated between the employer, the student and the course tutor. This is very time consuming. However, a face-to-face interview between employer and student is certainly desirable.

The log book or diary should be used as a record of skills and experience gained during job rehearsal. Analysis of this may then provide the basis of training needs and aims in further work-based projects or job rehearsal.

While on job rehearsal students will have various work-based assignments to complete which should aim to assess their knowledge and understanding. Employers and/or supervisors should be asked to comment on these assignments so that students' personal research is facilitated.

Our experience suggests that employers should be provided with guidelines to show how they may facilitate the progress of the student. These should include:

- encouraging students to work things out for themselves (within the bounds of safety), allowing problem-solving skills to be practised and encouraging the use of initiative;
- talking to students about the skills they are learning, helping them identify the skills on their list of objectives and encouraging them to realise that many of the skills are transferable to other situations;

- looking for strengths and weaknesses, praising and building confidence where necessary, as well as identifying weaknesses and discussing how these may be overcome.

The contribution of employers is a vital aspect of training. Placements will need to be carefully planned to avoid overstretching the available resources.

The record of achievement and negotiated references

These methods of assessment are negotiable and, therefore, lack consistency. However, they fulfil very important needs of students and prospective employers. The record of achievement provides the student with short-term, specific targets to aim for. It encourages the student by identifying areas where development is needed. It reduces the elements of luck and chance in the assessment procedures. The negotiated reference provides a detailed description of skills which are relevant to employment, assisting employers who are interviewing potential employees.

However, negotiation is a daunting task for many students. Frequent opportunities for self-assessment have to be provided in preparation for negotiation. The fear of failure is apparent in many students' under-evaluation of their performance and knowledge. Only in a friendly, informal atmosphere and with regular contact can the confidence and trust necessary for negotiation develop.

The time needed to undertake negotiated assessment is rarely provided in the timetables of staff. It also takes a considerable amount of employers' time. The record of achievement, as it stands, is particularly time consuming and relies heavily on the goodwill of staff and employers in compiling a detailed document. Many staff members felt this was an onerous task and employers were unable to give sufficient time for this process. If compiled, however, the record provides a comprehensive and relevant report of the standard of expertise attained by the student as well as an indication of areas which need to be improved.

Examinations

Where 'off-the-shelf' courses are utilised, the mode of assessment is prescribed by the appropriate examining body. Many of these are primarily practical examinations, e.g. First Aid, Bronze Medallion, CCPR coaching qualifications. The shortened course did not have sufficient time to train and enter students for these elements of the course. However, it is to be hoped that careful preparation and practical experience gained on the course would provide future students with the confidence to succeed.

The use of existing examinations has implications for the flexibility of provision. Examinations are usually held at specific times of the year which may not coincide with students' modules. Careful consideration of the timing of external assessment is vital.

Some of the external examinations, notably weight training, have very high fees. The regulations governing the payment of fees need to be examined carefully before students embark upon certain modules.

Final assessments

The course team decided that the final assessment (see Part 2) should be:

- an assignment which utilised the skills, understanding and knowledge from a number of the modules studied;
- regarded as a chance for students to show off what they know, not as a test of what they might know;

- operated within a given time limit (though this would usually be days, not hours) and present the student with familiar situations, using strategies which resemble those experienced previously in the course. This is to ensure that students are not put under unwarranted stress.

It was recommended that the final assessment should:

- give opportunities for students to obtain, select, use and apply relevant knowledge, not just recall information;
- assess skills and the ability to use them;
- assess understanding of the knowledge and skills;
- have clearly defined criteria;
- give credit to endeavour and reward positively what is presented, not negatively what is omitted.

The inclusion of an employer/leisure centre manager on the final assessment panel ensures the validity and relevance of the task and outcomes.

All students coped well with a presentation of their assessment material before a panel composed of the course tutor, a centre manager and the lecturer responsible for personal development. All students passed their final assessment, with one gaining a distinction.

Of the eight students who successfully completed the course, three found permanent posts, two temporary posts and two were invited to attend interviews and, at the time of writing, were awaiting these.

Validation by national awards bodies

The Business and Technician Education Council suggested that a certificate of achievement was the most appropriate level of certification for this course. Two types of certification are available:

- Certificate of Achievement: individual units (code 08);
- Certificate of Achievement: short programme of study (code 07).

Further developments which are possible are a broadening of the leisure industries studied and using the Certificate of Achievement to obtain exemption from appropriate units of a BTEC First Certificate or Diploma. Opportunities may also be available within BTEC Continuing Education provision.

PROMOTION AND RECRUITMENT

Materials

The promotional materials were not effective in reaching our desired target group. Although we received many enquiries and applications for the course, they were mainly from people who saw it as an entry point to the leisure industry and would seek to progress rapidly into management. Many already possessed qualifications and had experience of running group sporting activities (see 'Profiles of Students', Part 2). None saw the job of leisure operative as a specific goal.

Distribution

The distribution of materials was deliberately limited to the local area so that the group of applicants for the shortened course was not too large. (We aimed for a group of 12-15 students.) However, insufficient thought was given to the location and distribution of information. We used Jobcentres, leisure centres, fitness centres and local libraries, as well as college organisations such as APT (Adult Preparation and Training) and WOW (Wider Opportunities for Women). A wider group would be reached by including benefit offices, post offices, sports shops, pubs and clubs.

A variety of media needs to be employed, and at a range of times. We used advertisements in the local press and on local radio, but areas of the media which are underused are public transport vehicles, door-to-door selling, pub displays and women's groups.

'It was the experience of the college that feature articles in local newspapers were more effective in reaching the unemployed than formal advertisements'[4].

Selection and enrolment

Due to the relatively small number of applicants, the recruitment process was not fully tested. All applicants were accepted on the course. A full-year course would require a more extensive selection and counselling process.

The application form for the course should be clear and straightforward and should gather sufficient information to provide a profile of the potential student.

4

REVIEW

CURRICULUM DELIVERY AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT

This section presents the main conclusions reached as a result of testing the course in a shortened form. It identifies the learning strategies, teaching techniques, organisation and planning necessary when implementing adult training courses.

Student-centred learning

Adult training requires a flexible approach to accommodate the wide range of experience and needs of this student group. Many adults feel anxious about a return to formal training as it implies a return to the classroom. This feeling is particularly acute among those who have negative or unhappy memories of school and associate it with failure. It is important that adult courses adopt a student-centred model. The lecturer's role should be that of a facilitator – a guide, counsellor and motivator – rather than that of information giver, often remote, censorious and judgemental. This demands quite specific skills and may require radical changes from existing teaching/learning strategies. The shortened course highlighted some of the results of varying teaching and learning strategies, as well as the anxieties and training needs of staff.

Adults often regard formal education with scepticism. The aims of any adult course, therefore, must be clear. Although students may join the course for a variety of reasons, we must be honest and clear about:

- who the course is aimed at;
- what the course involves;
- what the course aims are;
- what is expected of the student.

An induction phase is an important aspect in developing this understanding, allowing a taster of the activities involved and providing the opportunity for counselling to ensure that each student will benefit from following the course.

Transferable skills

It should be borne in mind that although the course 'Training to be a Leisure Operative' appears vocationally specific, many of the skills are transferable to a wider range of leisure industries. A study undertaken at NWCTA to assess the comparability of competences required in a wide range of leisure courses, including this one, identified many areas where required skills are tranferable and comparable.

Students' individual needs

The course was designed for adults in the 20+ age group who have been unemployed for some time. Unemployment and redundancy rarely coincide with the academic year, and courses run on such guidelines are impractical for many. Unemployed students often have limited financial resources, and so a course with limited study hours and involving limited costs is important. Adult students often have responsibilities and constraints which make following a formal course acutely difficult.

Attendance at college, particularly at specific times, often precludes many potential students, notably women with child-rearing responsibilities. Flexibility of access and provision is of crucial importance to the adult student.

For this training course to remain effective and valid, it must be flexible enough to allow for changing and individual needs. The course is structured in free-standing modules which may be studied separately. Exemption from certain modules is possible, depending on the existing skills, knowledge and experience of some students. A variety of qualifications may be gained which may be useful in a number of leisure industries such as health farms, beauty salons, and hotels and catering.

Partial completion of the course may still enable the student to gain valuable and useful qualifications, but will certainly provide a detailed negotiated reference detailing their record of achievement in many of the skills valued by employers.

Students need to see the relevance of a course if they are to remain committed to it. Job rehearsal provides practical experience of the demands of being a leisure operative and opportunities for students to make contacts within this employment sector, and allows an evaluation of students' possible potentials as leisure operatives. This course is designed to fill a gap in training provision, i.e. skill-based training at operative level. The relevance and validity of this training is accepted by employers and professional bodies such as ILAM (Institute of Leisure and Management) and IBRM (Institute of Baths and Recreation Management). The course is based on training needs identified by employers, and has been developed in close consultation with them. Close co-operation with employers ensures continued relevance and informs them about the qualities of the course and its 'graduates'.

An important element of teaching/learning strategies is that they should be responsive to students' needs. Feedback from students is an important component of curriculum design, course structure and content. Efforts need to be made by lecturers to respond to students' needs, particularly in relation to learning strategies. Regular meetings and encouragement of students to evaluate the course are an important element of this process. An open, trusting staff/student relationship yields benefits to all concerned.

Access in terms of entry requirements should be kept as open as possible. Employers are more interested in keen, mature workers capable of taking responsibility than high levels of formal education. The Phase 1 survey revealed the optimum age to be 22. The nature of external examinations means that a basic level of literacy and numeracy is required (for example, City and Guilds Communication level 1 (772), Numeracy level 1 (364) or (363)).

A range of teaching/learning strategies is appropriate to accommodate students' needs. Great benefit is often derived from a group of students with common aims joining together for certain activities. The mutual support and encouragement from this contact is often very important for adults who have been out of the education system for some time. Central college facilities offer a wider range of accommodation and learning resources. However, adults often prefer a smaller, more accessible outreach centre as an initial point of contact. Such centres provide essential tutorial support and basic facilities and resources. They are useful in helping to develop a sense of identity and belonging, often difficult in the alienatingly large main college campus. On a main site it is important to strive for a 'home base' for adult students who otherwise often feel that they do not 'belong' to the college. Another appropriate strategy may be distance learning. Such schemes allow individuals to

study at home with minimal disruption to their domestic routines. Not all aspects of the course are suitable for such learning but the sample learning activities (see Part 2) illustrate the potential of this method of delivery.

Vocational experience for staff

To assist students in job search, on job rehearsal and in the preparation of work-based projects/assignments, it is important that staff recognise the validity of the course they are presenting and have some knowledge of the industry into which students will be going. It is desirable, therefore, that all staff presenting the course should be familiar with the leisure industry; work experience opportunities should be available to ensure this. Work relating to a particular course should be discussed and ideas exchanged freely. Isolation of staff is as detrimental to a course as isolation of students. Staff need to be aware of what they are training for, i.e. a leisure operative, and not be constrained by subject or departmental parameters. The matrix systems adopted by many colleges are gradually leading to a less rigid definition of 'whose work' a particular course may be. Different accounting systems would assist in the dissolution of lines of demarcation.

Support systems

The Challenge of Change recommends the 'creation of a comprehensive service of education guidance for adults in England and Wales'[5]. The counselling process is important in helping students to decide whether the training programme is relevant to them. If this training is inappropriate, students should not be left to seek alternative provision. Guidance on alternative courses must be available through adult training provision agencies within the college, or attached to it. With new training courses, it is essential that agencies such as Jobcentres and local employers are kept informed as to appropriate applicants for the course and the quality of the qualifications gained from it. Our experience indicates that local Jobcentres are anxious to have this type of information and are willing to provide staff training time in order to learn about new courses.

Regular review of the content and teaching/learning strategies are essential if the course is to fulfil its promise for the students. Discussion and evaluation of teaching/learning strategies should be an integral aspect of the teaching role, and openness can only be beneficial. Course evaluation requires a positive approach; it is an aid to staff, not a judgement upon them. Self-appraisal forms an important part of this course and is necessary for staff and students. For the full benefit of this process to be reaped, continuity of staffing should be aimed for. Consistency in approach, method and review should enable the strengths of this type of course to be enhanced.

STUDENT ASSESSMENT AND COURSE VALIDATION

This section identifies the characteristics of the assessment programme found most valuable in providing a comprehensive assessment of the skills and competences of the student and the demands this programme has in terms of resources and commitment.

Assessment strategy

Assessment strategy needs to be based on realistic, relevant and practical situations which incorporate the aims and objectives of the courses. It should relate directly to knowledge and skills required at work. It should determine the extent to which students have been successful in attaining the criteria which employers define as important in a leisure operative.

The mode of assessment should enable students to display what they know, have learned and can do. It should utilise a variety of techniques and limit the amount of formal written work required. The aim is to develop confidence in students and encourage them to display their skill, knowledge and understanding without fear of ridicule or failure.

Assessment should provide a system of qualifications, accreditation and references which will be accepted by employers. The system should identify the skills and competences students have in terms of specific knowledge about the area of work and their understanding of the world of work.

The assessment strategy must furnish students with a feeling of achievement and progression. It should provide a positive assessment of their skills, knowledge and understanding.

There is a need to publicise the value of records of achievement and negotiated references among potential employers. A qualification or reference has little currency if not accepted by potential employers. The notion that negotiated documents or 'non-examination' qualifications are third rate must be dispelled by the provision of reliable and useful information to employers.

The assessment strategy implemented during job rehearsal needs to have credibility with employers, teaching staff and students. It should include the assessment of skills and knowledge, and the ability to use skills and apply relevant knowledge and skills[6]. The training programme and job rehearsal must complement each other so that experience in either sphere prepares the student for the other.

Modes of assessment

It is important that the approach to assignments is as consistent as possible so that students can relate each activity and module to the others in the course.

The role of the course team is important here. Assignments need to be discussed and modified to produce the most suitable exercises for students to undertake, to provide similarity of approach and avoid repetitious work. Both students and staff should review the assignments.

One recommendation of the INSET training days was that staff should undertake some of the assignments themselves because:

- it would be easier to appreciate the problems experienced by students;
- it would provide a staff development exercise, i.e. the college teaching staff would learn more about the leisure complexes by undergoing experiential learning with student-centred learning materials.

Careful planning of assignments is necessary to ensure an acceptable workload for both students and staff. The course team should decide:

- the timing of the assignments within the course;
- the number of cross-modular and work-based assignments;
- the objectives to be assessed during the course and at the final assessment;
- the criteria to be used to assess performance, and how to encourage a consistent approach.

This planning is intended to assist students and should be negotiable. A prescriptive package is not envisaged.

The inclusion of group assignments and assignments involving the skills of more than one module is an important aspect of unifying the course for students and enabling them to perceive the interrelationship between modules.

Work-based assignments may serve in two ways. They may assist students to gain knowledge and experience of work and serve as an introduction to the course for people already employed as leisure operatives, seeking to extend their training and gain additional qualifications, knowledge, skills and understanding.

To provide students with an indication of their progress in fulfilling the objectives of the course, records of achievement should be compiled (see Part 2). The course is structured to provide objective criteria for students to aim at. Records of achievement allow students to examine, with the assistance of lecturers and employers, how far they are achieving the criteria and will provide intermediate, short-term specific goals for them to work towards. It also enables students to examine further the opportunities they wish to develop.

The record of achievement needs to be updated throughout the course and students' short-term goals constantly re-defined if optimal progress is to be made. Towards the end of the course, interviews between tutor(s) and student should deal with negotiating a reference based on skills, knowledge and understanding demonstrated by the student on the course.

Validation

It is important that the philosophy and aims of the course are not debased to gain recognition by one of the existing validating bodies for national certification. However, the Certificate of Achievement from BTEC appears to offer the flexibility required by this course. Gaining a nationally recognised award will be of greater value to students in the job market than local or college awards.

MARKETING, SELECTION AND ENROLMENT

Targeting promotional materials

'Marketing is concerned with assisting the customers' needs, designing and offering a product at the right price to meet that need, producing the product, delivering it and offering an after-sales service. These factors are also relevant to the marketing of an education and training service'[7].

Promotion must be carefully targeted if recruitment is to be successful; and recruitment should be on the basis that the student will benefit from the course.

Promotional material should be clear and honest about the aims, content and provision of the course. It must convince the adult unemployed that the course will be of value to them and give relevant information, i.e. course aims, content, relevance to work.

Targeting promotional materials for the adult unemployed is a new experience for FE colleges. The usual channels for recruitment do not reach this target group. New strategies for promotion and recruitment, therefore, need to be planned at college management level.

The targeting of promotional materials is of vital importance. Visual materials such as posters and leaflets need to be displayed regularly – in benefit offices, post offices, sports shops and clubs, as well as Jobcentres, leisure centres and local libraries.

If promotion material is correctly targeted and effective, customers will follow up this critical contact by seeking further information. The college must be able to deal with the enquiries efficiently and at a personal level.

Recruitment

Once applications have been received, applicants should be invited to the college for further discussions and an interview to determine whether the course suits their needs and whether they will benefit from it. If they decide not to enrol on the course, alternative courses and guidance should be offered.

During recruitment, interviews and induction, counselling should play a major part, covering:

- the structure of the course;
- identification of the learning skills required;
- opportunities to discuss the different methods of assessment, particularly the records of achievement;
- the responsibility of the student for his/her own learning.

During interviews, opportunities should be given for interviewees to visit present student groups to see the type of work they may be doing and discuss the course.

It is recommended that the interviewing panel consists of the course tutor and a centre manager. This will help to ensure that only students who will benefit from the course are encouraged to enrol.

Continuing support

Unemployed adults must be encouraged to see the college as a resource at their disposal, where advice as well as suitable courses may be obtained. Close liaison with careers advisory services is important. Courses offered to unemployed adults must be relevant to their needs if colleges are to become centres where adults seek advice, training or personal development.

5 SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

SUMMARY

The course design is based on the development of relevant skills, as identified by the analysis of needs. Many of these skills are transferable to a wide range of occupations, within both the leisure industries and other employment sectors which involve working with the public.

The flexibility required for adult training demands an open learning system, the priority in which should be 'flexibility of provision and access'[8]. The characteristics of such an open learning system are:

- a flexible enrolment pattern;
- the provision of a variety of centres and facilities, e.g. outreach centres, drop-in facilities;
- the provision of suitable accommodation; most appropriate is the provision of a 'home base' with refreshment facilities;
- the provision of a range of learning resources;
- no rigid entrance requirements;
- allowance for students' previous experience and qualifications to be taken into account for exemption from parts of the course, where appropriate;
- a modular course with free-standing modules;
- the provision of detailed and appropriate references and the opportunity to gain qualifications even if the entire course is not completed;
- the provision of a counselling and guidance service to inform of alternative courses and opportunities as and when necessary.

The teaching and learning strategies employed must respond to the needs of students. Such strategies are characterised by:

- a student-centred approach using active learning techniques such as problem solving, simulation, role play and work-based projects;
- a clear role for the lecturer as a facilitator;
- a clear statement of assessment objectives based on attributes identified by employers as important and against which students' achievements may be measured;
- the provision of job rehearsal opportunities and other practical experience;
- encouragement of a variety of learning and assessment techniques;
- seeking regular feedback from students about all aspects of the course so that modifications may be made and the course remain responsive to students' needs;
- maintenance of contacts with employers to evaluate the training and ensure its relevance to the job market and to the students;
- presentation of the curriculum in a consistent and coherent way. This is best ensured by the operation of a course team which meets regularly.

The development of open learning systems requires the development of a greater bank of learning materials utilising a wide range of media and comprehensive support tutoring systems.

The assessment strategy should be directly related to the aims and objectives of the course, utilising the skills, knowledge and understanding likely to be necessary in the world of work. The mode of assessment should enable students to display their ability, not highlight their limitations.

A variety of assessment techniques should be utilised:

- assignments employing active learning techniques and a variety of presentation methods, and seeking to encourage the student to investigate further;
- work-based assignments to enable students to apply and extend their skills, knowledge and understanding from the training course, or to enable employees to sample the types of learning activity on the course and apply their knowledge/experience;
- cross-modular assignments to ensure that students see the relevance of the modules to each other and to the world of work;
- job rehearsal, concluded with an interview between employer, student and course tutor, to discuss the progress made; the log book compiled by students is particularly useful here;
- a record of achievement to provide a summary of the progress made by students and the objectives they should strive towards;
- a negotiated reference based upon a record of achievement to provide a comprehensive survey of the capabilities of the student for potential employers;
- an end-of-module/final assessment structured to allow students to display their skills, knowledge and understanding, and ability to apply these;
- examinations set by examination bodies for 'off-the-shelf' modules.

It is important to gain employers' approval for the course, its qualifications and assessment procedures.

Accreditation by BTEC is possible at the level of a Certificate of Achievement.

The course is designed to prepare students for work at operative level within the leisure complex. The breadth of training and qualification possible would enable potential employers to offer a more varied job schedule to the 'graduates'. Career progression into supervisory levels may also be easier once a basic training and level of qualification have been achieved.

Staff training is essential in raising awareness of the learning styles required when training adults. Such training must:

- be planned sufficiently in advance to facilitate follow-up work and further development of the ideas explored and ensure all staff participating receive training;
- inform staff of appropriate presentation and learning techniques as these are of vital importance in students' perceptions and reception of the course;
- be accessible at all times during the year to integrate new staff into the course as quickly as possible;
- specifically include counselling and negotiating skills;
- stress the importance of their commitment to the course and its philosophy;

- encourage staff to adopt self-assessment strategies and support regular reviews of course content and teaching/learning strategies;
- be continuous; staff training does not cease to be a requirement simply because the course has begun.

It is important to involve members of the leisure industry in the presentation of the course to students. However, the representatives will need training in presentation and tutoring techniques if their contribution is to be fully effective. Equally, lecturers from colleges need to gain vocational experience within relevant employment spheres if they are to perceive the validity and relevance of the course in a realistic and meaningful way.

The flexibility required by adult training demands a considerable allocation of time for guidance, assessment, review and administration. The adoption of flexible training needs the support of college and LEA management to provide adequate resources.

Course managers should aim for continuity of staffing. This is particularly important where assessment techniques, such as negotiated records of achievement and negotiated references, play an important role in the assessment strategy.

These modes of learning do not fit easily into the system of administration operating in educational institutions. They are expensive in terms of the time needed for lecturers to operate the guidance, counselling and negotiation. However, it is widely accepted that changes are necessary in further education institutions if they are to fulfil adult training needs in the late 1980s and 1990s, and many institutions are pioneering such changes. The commitment to provision for adult training has to be part of LEA and college policy if it is to succeed.

Marketing resources for the adult unemployed requires radical new techniques. The channels previously used to inform the public of courses are inefficient and largely ineffective in reaching this target group. Promotion materials must be displayed in locations frequented by the unemployed and provide details of course aims and content.

Colleges must be honest and informative about the type of course being offered and the provision which will be available. They must strive to provide advice and information for unemployed adults and encourage them to use the college as a resource. Recruitment must involve face-to-face interviews, preferably between the applicant, the course tutor and a centre manager. It should also provide the applicant with first-hand knowledge of the course.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The conclusions based on the analysis of needs are still relevant so that, in many instances, the recommendations that follow have been refined rather than changed as a result of the pilot course experience.

Course delivery

The ethos of the course is dependent on its mode of delivery. Genuine flexible learning packages are ones that remove constraints. It is recognised that there are significant constraints yet to be overcome in making both the further education system and the methods of course delivery more flexible. The following recommendations are therefore made:

- Courses should be provided where, when and as students want them. Barriers to access should be removed, especially with regard to entry qualifications and costs to the student.

- The provision must be student-centred and utilise the experience of the target group. This involves active teaching and learning strategies which encourage students to realise their full potential.
- Course provision need not be wholly institutionalised.
- Students' views must be sought at all stages of training. The design of future courses should be amended to take account of this feedback.
- Publicity should be targeted in terms of both venue and type. A great deal of time, effort and resources need to be devoted to reaching the target group.
- Access to courses commencing at a fixed point, particularly at the beginning of the academic year, is limited. Courses should be organised on a 'roll-on/roll-off' basis and should have flexible arrangements for enrolment, administration and payment of fees.

Links with industry

Liaison with industry is a fundamental aspect of the successful implementation of this course. This needs to be maintained to ensure the relevance of course material and the involvement of leisure industry staff in training and assessing students and in providing job rehearsal opportunities.

- Job rehearsal should play a major part in 'graduate' employability. A negotiated reference at the end of the course should have inputs from the employer and the educationist as future employers want to know whether the student is employable with regard to both qualifications and attitudes towards employment.
- The purpose of the course needs to be clarified to the client group in order for them to see the relevance of all modules to their training.
- The course relies on developing systematic links with the industry. It is essential to involve managers and supervisors as part of the teaching team so that a joint involvement of education and the industry is obtained. The dialogue between institutions and the industry must be sufficient to entice managers to involve themselves with this course.

Transferability of skill-based training

With the general curriculum trend into core skills, it is accepted that the teaching approach advocated in this project is suited to a wide range of courses such as CPVE, TVEI, GCSE and BTEC and, indeed, is already evident in educational institutions demonstrating good practice. Therefore:

- There is a need to replace time-serving courses by achievement of agreed standards of competence. Assessment systems should measure understanding, experience and practical skills, as well as knowledge, against recognised standards of competence. They should be indicators of positive achievement rather than of failure.
- Exemptions must operate for students who have already covered core skills to the required standard.

Implications

To enable successful implementation of adult training courses, consideration should be given to the way in which the course is presented and to the support systems required. To this end:

- Further work is required on increasing the bank of learning materials for open and distance learning. An up-to-date library or database could provide current availability of materials.
- There should be more involvement with agencies such as the National Extension College (NEC) and the Open College to produce suitable materials in different learning modes.

- Staff require training and retraining in new and existing teaching skills appropriate to the delivery of new-style programmes.
- The teaching team should consist of staff who have credibility, understanding and empathy with students' needs.
- Staff should be fully aware of the aims, objectives and procedures to be adopted and the contribution they will be expected to make to the course. To facilitate this, a systematic, regular and progressive staff development programme is required to develop student-centred learning materials and the necessary classroom management skills.
- A specific INSET programme should be provided in order to develop the necessary negotiating, guidance and counselling skills.
- A systematic, albeit sensitive, staff appraisal system would enable staff development needs to be discussed and identified regularly and ensure that the abilities of all staff are fully utilised.
- In addition to the student accommodation provision recommended in Phase 1, it is further recommended that an adult common room and a specific course teaching room, informally furnished, with nearby counselling room and coffee-making facilities should be provided.
- Effective implementation of a new curriculum can only take place if it is fully planned and correctly timetabled. College management must be sympathetic to these 'hidden' hours associated with profiling, counselling, team-teaching, team meetings, assignment preparation, job rehearsal placements and visits.
- If further education colleges are to respond to the training needs of adults, authorities will need to address the problem of funding these courses adequately.
- As with any course, the teaching team should be 'not less than the best'. It should have stability and a long-term commitment to the course aims and objectives.
- Staff from further education institutions need a period of secondment into the leisure industry (one month minimum). Institutions and LEAs need to discuss this for their mutual benefit.
- Managers and supervisors need support and direction with their teaching strategies. Agencies such as PICKUP, REPLAN, ILAM and IBRM could provide these.

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OBJECTIVES

The objectives for which **The Further Education Unit (FEU)** is established are to promote, encourage and develop the efficient provision of further education in the United Kingdom and for that purpose.

a) to review and evaluate the range of existing further education curricula and programmes and to identify overlap, duplication, deficiencies and inconsistencies therein;

b) to determine priorities for action to improve the provision of further education and to make recommendations as to how such improvements can be effected;

c) to carry out studies in further education and to support investigations of and experimentation in, and the development of, further education curricula and to contribute to and assist in the evaluation of initiatives in further education;

d) to disseminate and publish, and to assist in the dissemination and publication of, information about recommendations for and experiments and developments in further educations.